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ABSTRACT

A guide, designed especially for non-American educators, presents information to promote understanding of the U.S. policy-making process in higher education. Levels for policy analysis concern individuals, institutions, groups of institutions, state and local levels, national level, transnational level, and comparison of countries. Representative policy issues can be viewed from the perspective of institutions, state governments, national governments, and transnational levels. For each of these levels of analysis, issues and types of agencies and concerned parties are listed. Institutions are listed under the following categories: U.S. agencies, state and regional agencies, associations, university and research centers, unions, international organizations, special study groups, and other organizations. U.S. legislation pertaining to higher education is also listed. Background reading materials are provided for the following areas: institutional, state policy, national policy, transnational, periodicals, bibliographies, data sources, and special reports. (SW)

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Guide to American Higher Education Policy-Making

American higher education in the 1978-79 academic year is a $55 billion enterprise, representing 3 percent of the U.S. Gross National Product, serving over 11 million students, 4 million of them part-time, in over 3100 non-profit, accredited colleges and universities recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation. Over one million professionals are employed in the "industry," 800,000 as faculty members. Since 1960, growth has been characteristic; in 1960, $6.7 billion (non-adjusted) were expended in the 2000 then existing non-profit institutions in which 300,000 faculty members were employed. From 1960 to 1975, higher education's share of the nation's overall education budget increased from 27 to 37 percent. Demographic growth is now leveling off in anticipation of a projected modest decline in student numbers in the 1980's.[1]

The scale and complexity of the process of policy development in American higher education is normally difficult for even close observers to understand fully. Lacking anything truly comparable to a ministry of education, typical of most other nations, the centers of decision-making power in U.S. higher education are widely dispersed -- even enactment of legislation proposing a U.S. Department of Education would not amount to formation of a body functionally comparable to a ministry of education. The political decision-making process typical in the United States is also evident in higher education: a non-linear, multi-faceted, complex feedback loop process.

Moreover, the nature of the process varies with the issue and the level at which that issue is addressed: local, state, national, and so on. Given agencies, institutions, and groups may or may not influence a policy outcome, depending upon the issue and level of address. With knowledge of the level and

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issue area, the policy-making process is predictable to a degree.

For a variety of reasons, policy and social scientists have paid only modest attention to the process of decision-making in American higher education. Research is inadequate, and much of the research that is done relates to policies or issues rather than the process. Bureaucrats, coordinators, and managers do much of this short-range work, and scholarship on higher education, in spite of some encouraging signs, tends to be thin in the United States, often isolated in study centers rather than located within mainstream academic departments.

Foreign educators, for these reasons, as well as cultural barriers, are frequently mystified by what they learn about the American higher education policy-making process. Foreign visitors to the principal higher education associations, most of which are based in Washington, D.C., have difficulty setting aside European or Third World models of postsecondary education, notably the essential involvement of education ministries, when discussing the U.S. system. This article is a guide for understanding the U.S. policy-making process in higher education, designed especially for non-American educators.

The framework below is reductionist in that levels of analysis, policy issues, and actors are listed unidimensionally. Further, the framework is heuristic in that it can be used as a checklist when examining various issue areas. Case studies or decision models could have been used as alternatives to the framework here, although book length studies would be required to explore the necessary cases and model-building would require complex development.[3] Thus, the framework here is only a place to start in organizing research on the policy-making process. The reading list at the end of the article is both a bibliographic reference and a demonstration of some important gaps in the literature.[4]

I. LEVELS OF ANALYSIS

A. Individuals: students, faculty members, administrators, trustees, parents, alumni, external constituencies including legislators and local and state officials, benefactors, intellectuals, the opinion-making public, journalists, and government, foundation, and association executives.

B. Institutions: colleges and universities (also their sub-divisions) and other vendors of postsecondary education, including proprietary and non-proprietary institutions.

C. Groups of institutions: consortia (usually regional) or classes of institutions including doctoral-granting research universities, comprehensive institutions, liberal arts colleges, two-year institutions, and professional schools.

D. State and local: individual and institutional membership organizations, state coordinating commissions, state legislatures and governments, and local governments.

E. National: individual and institutional membership associations, the Federal government, foundations, the media, educational enterprises in the private sector, and academic contacts.

F. Transnational: professional and institutional associations, international organizations, bi-lateral and multi-lateral contacts, and world-wide academic communication channels.

G. Comparative: United States and Western nations including Japan, Communist-bloc countries, developing countries, and relatively undeveloped countries/territories.

II. REPRESENTATIVE POLICY ISSUES

A. Institutional: governance; policy development; constituency relationships; public and community relationships and practices; personnel and legal matters; prestige; unionization; curricular directions; evaluation procedures; institutional renewal;

interdepartmental and inter-institutional relationships; financing; planning and budgeting; leadership; research; academic freedom; ethics; research; function (elitism versus egalitarianism and pragmatism versus purism); morale; professionalism; bureaucracy; recognition and status; and personnel and professional directions of faculty members, administrators, and students.

B. State: influence and roles of statewide boards and commissions; relationships with governors, legislatures, benefactors, and the private sector; autonomy for higher education; accountability; finance; lobbying; regulations and laws; public-independent institutional relationships; state policies; statutory stipulations; student aid; and state taxation and tuition policies.

C. National: educational opportunity; finance; accountability; regulations and laws; planning; educational delivery systems; interest groups; protection of higher education; civil rights; church-state relationships; student consumerism, legal matters and due process; student, institutional, and research aid; institutional autonomy; affirmative action; lobbying; innovation; statistics and data collection; women and minorities in higher education; philanthropy; copyrights and patents; youth policy; veterans; military education; handicapped in higher education; access; postal rates; energy; prescribed personnel practices; privacy; testing; athletics; research directions; and government organization.

D. Transnational: intellectual interchange; freedom of exchange; international studies and education; research; science and technology transfer; such crosscutting commitments as ideology, religion, ethnicity, and language; international law and organizations; and recognition and status.

III. INSTITUTIONS

A. U.S. Agencies: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Education (also for Legislation and Planning and Evaluation) of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (DHEW); Education Division of DHEW including the Office of Education,

National Institute of Education, Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, National Center for Education Statistics, and Institute for Museum Services; National Science Foundation; National Research Council; National Science Board; Office of Management and Budget; Office of Science and Technology; U.S. Department of Defense; Veterans Administration; National Endowment for Humanities and the Arts; National Institutes of Health; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Federal Communications Commission; National Labor Relations Board; Federal Interagency Committee on Education; and 439 separate Federal programs on higher education by one count,[5] which are addressed to 15 target populations in 27 major content areas.[6]

B. U.S. Legislation: Morrill Land Grant Act (1862): Servicemen's Readjustment Act (GI Bill of Rights) (1944): National Science Foundation (1950): Housing Act (1950); National Defense Education Act (1958); Higher Education Facilities Act (1963); Economic Opportunity Act (1964); Civil Rights Act (1964); Higher Education Act (1965); National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities (1965); Veterans Readjustment Benefits Act (1966); Education Amendments of 1972; and projected Higher Education Amendments of 1979.[7]

C. State and Regional Agencies: state higher education systems offices; state postsecondary education commissions (under Section 1202 of the Education Amendments of 1972); state higher education facilities commissions; National Council of State Directors of Community/Junior Colleges; Education Commission of the States; Southern Regional Education Board; Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education; New England Board of Higher Education; and consortia of institutions, including 114 formal ones nation-wide (during 1975-76 with three or more members), such as the Academic Affairs Conference of Midwestern Universities, Atlanta University Center, Auraria Higher Education Center, Christian College Consortium, The Claremont Colleges, Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area, Five Colleges, Great Lakes Colleges Association, Midwest Universities Consortium for International

Activities, Settlement Institutions of Appalachia, Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities, and University of Mid-America.[8]

D. Associations: Members of the Washington Higher Education Secretariat, including American Association for Higher Education; American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education; American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers; American Association of Community and Junior Colleges; American Association of University Professors; American Association of State Colleges and Universities; American Council on Education; Association of American Colleges; Association of American Universities; Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges; Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities; Council for Advancement and Support of Education; Council of Graduate Schools in the United States; Council on Postsecondary Accreditation; Council for the Advancement of Small Colleges; National Association of College and University Attorneys; National Association of College and University Business Officers; National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities; National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges; Department of Colleges and Universities of the National Catholic Educational Association. Other especially important associations include the American Association for the Advancement of Science, American Library Association, Association of American Law Schools, Association of American Medical Colleges, Association of Independent Colleges and Schools, and Association of Urban Education (also see section III-I below).

E. University and Research Centers: Claremont University Center; College of William and Mary; Columbia University; Cornell University; New York University; Stanford University; State University of New York at Buffalo; University of California at Berkeley and Los Angeles; University of Chicago; University of Colorado, University of Denver; University of Illinois; University of Kentucky; University of Michigan; University of Minnesota; University of Oklahoma; University of Southern California; University of Virginia; and the University of Washington are among 67

institutions which offer a doctoral specialization in higher education.[9] Other centers include Brookings Institution; Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education; College Entrance Examination Board; Education Commission of the States; Higher Education Research Institute (Los Angeles); Joseph Froomking, Inc.; National Center for Higher Education Management Systems; Educational Testing Service; National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NEA); Policy Analysis Service of the American Council on Education; and Academy for Educational Development.

F. Unions: American Association of University Professors; American Federation of Teachers; and the National Education Association of the United States.

G. International Organizations: Agency for International Development; American Council of Learned Societies; Association of Commonwealth Universities; Association of Universities Partially or Entirely of the French Language; Council on the International Exchange of Scholars; International Association for the Advancement of Educational Research; International Association of Universities; International Council for Educational Development; the Division of International Education Relations of the American Council on Education; International Social Science Council; International Studies Association; Institute of International Education; Midwest Universities Consortium for International Activities, Inc.; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; Overseas Development Council; Overseas Liaison Committee of the American Council on Education; Society for International Development; Swedish Academy and related organizations for the Nobel Prizes; United Nations University; United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization; U.S. International Communications Agency; World Bank; and transnational disciplinary societies and bi-lateral and multi-lateral agreements on scientific, educational, and cultural cooperation and exchange.

H. Special Study Groups: Commission on Higher Education (1946); Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (1967-1974); President's Task Force on Higher Education /on Priorities in Higher Education/ ("Hester Report") (1970); Task Force on Higher Education (Newman Task Force)(1971 and 1973); Committee for Economic Development (1973); Commission on Academic Tenure in Higher Education (1973); Commission on Non-Traditional Study (1973); National Board on Graduate Education (1973); National Commission on the Financing of Postsecondary Education (1973); Special Task Force to the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare /on Work in America/(1973); and Sloan Commission on Higher Education and Government (1977-).

I. Other Organizations: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges; Adult Education Association of the U.S.; American Association of School Administrators; American College Testing Program; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; American Vocational Association; AFL/CIO /union/; Association of Research Libraries; Association for the Study of Higher Education; College Entrance Examination Board; Council of Chief State School Officers; Council on Exceptional Children; (Emergency) Committee for Full-Funding of Education Programs; Educational Testing Service; Ford Foundation; Government Relations Luncheon Group; Institute for Services to Education; Lilly Endowment, Inc.; A.W. Mellon Foundation; Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools; John Minter and Associates, Inc.; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education; National Association of Educational Broadcasters; National Audio-Visual Association; National Center for Higher Education; National Committee for Citizens in Education; National Farmers Union; National School Boards Association; National Student Association; National Student Lobby; National University Extension Association; New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc. (Commission on Institutions of Higher Education); New York State Education Department; North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools (Commission on Institutions of Higher Education);

Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges; Project on Education and Status of Women; Rockefeller Foundation; Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (Commission on Colleges); Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association; United Negro College Fund, Inc.; Washington Higher Education Group; Western Association of Schools and Colleges; Western Interstate Commission for Higner Education; and W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The number of U.S. educational organizations is difficult to estimate because many may be categorized as cultural, scientific, health, public affairs, or otherwise related. One listing of national educational organizations, though, does include 886 groups.[10]

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